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Severe Weather Update

9 March 2008

Parts of Southern Britain could see widespread disruption on Monday as severe gales move across the country.

Forecasters at the Met Office, the UK's national weather service, are working closely with the government agencies, emergency services, rail operators and power companies to plan for the disruption likely to be caused by winds up to 70 m.p.h in places.

The worst hit areas are expected to be parts of Wales, western and southern parts of England where all emergency responders are on alert and preparations have been put in place in readiness for the storm.

Graeme Leitch, Public Weather Assurance Manager at the Met Office, said: "Southerly winds are expected to strengthen during the early hours of Monday causing severe gales. Then, after a brief respite, further westerly severe gales are forecast for during the day and into the early hours of Tuesday. Coastal areas of the extreme Southwest could see gusts up to 80 m.p.h, with gusts of at least 60 m.p.h further inland. There could be a risk of disruption to transport links and power supplies."

David Rooke, Head of Flood Risk Management at the Environment Agency said: "People living in properties in low lying exposed coastal areas of Wales, the Southwest and Southern England should make sure they are monitoring the situation by checking flood updates on the Environment Agency website or ringing Floodline.

"The strong winds will combine with spring high tides to significantly elevate the water levels along the coast which is likely to cause some flooding.

"We understand that people are fascinated by the sea but at times like this we urge them not to go and watch the high waves – it is extremely dangerous and only takes a few seconds for someone to be knocked off their feet, into the water."

People are advised to stay in touch with the latest weather forecast and warnings on the Met Office website, and tune into local radio and TV. Those concerned by the risk of coastal flooding should call Floodline on 0845 988 1188 for the latest flood warnings in their area.

Latest forecast for the UK

UK warnings of severe weather

What to do in severe weather

Transport and flooding links

For further information:

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